

## GULF OF ALASKA GROUNDFISH RATIONALIZATION

The Council revised its problem statement and objectives for rationalizing the GOA fisheries based on recommendations from the GOA Working Group. The Council endorsed the approach taken by the working group in its development of rationalization alternatives for analysis. The group made the following recommendations (see the Council website for the full working group minutes). Contact Jane DiCosimo for additional information.

1. The working group recommended that the Council refer a management issue related to the Pacific cod fishery to the Board of Fisheries at its next Joint Protocol Committee meeting. A discrepancy between state and federal regulations allows vessels that are not federally licensed to fish in state waters during the Federal opening. Landings from those unlicensed vessels count against the federal TAC because state regulations stipulate that the state guideline harvest level does not begin until 10 days after the federal TAC closes. Continuation of this regulatory discrepancy would void any gain from rationalizing federal fisheries.
2. The working group recommended a comprehensive (one step) approach to rationalizing federal groundfish fisheries to avoid sideboard issues.
3. The working group will review proposals and address IFQs (1-pie/2-pie) and cooperative options over the summer. The working group recommended that the analytical alternatives should be structured so that:
  - a. Different options may be recommended for the Western and Central Gulf
  - b. Exempt Southeast Outside, except for sideboard issues
  - c. Analyze West Yakutat/SEO split for all species to determine sideboard effects
  - d. Exempt areas which may be rationalized in the future
4. The working group will meet on May 13-14 in Juneau to review data summaries on qualifying years and working group assignments. Subsequent meetings may be scheduled for August and/or September. Additional recommendations will address options for analyzing qualifying years for eligibility of harvesters and processors (drop one or two years of 1996-2001 or 1995-2000) after further consideration of the following issues.
  - a. All species
  - b. By gear type:
    - trawl (option for a pelagic/non-pelagic split)
    - fixed (option for a longline/pot split)
    - options to allow transfers to new gear type after initial issuance
    - exempt jig
  - c. Transferability (across fisheries, across gear types, using halibut and PSC caps)
  - d. New species

The working group may:

- a. develop a 2 tier license system for pollock and cod where a 2<sup>nd</sup> tier license would be activated when TACs return to some benchmark
  - b. reward dependence on Gulf fisheries
  - c. recognize regional delivery patterns
  - d. issue shares by vessel category
  - e. mitigate AFA leasing impacts
  - f. address the spillover effects of 2000 opilio closure
  - g. recognize and address regional delivery patterns.
5. NMFS staff will proceed with the Notice of Intent for Scoping. Alaska Native Tribes and coastal communities will be consulted in drafting rationalization alternatives. Scoping meetings may be held in Kodiak, Cordova or Valdez, Cook Inlet, Sand Point or King Cove, and Seattle.